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AUTHOR	Sato, Koichi
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ABSTRACT

This paper examines obstacles faced by Japanese students learning English, noting that many such students are highly competent in reading, writing, and listening, but not in speaking. It suggests that students are worried about making oral mistakes, which cannot be erased once uttered, and that oral activities completed in English class are often meaningless and irrelevant to daily life. Four chapters focus on the following: (1) "The Problems Which Lead to Japanese Who Cannot Speak English" (the grammar-translation method, large class size, and student characteristics); (2) "Two Keys for Improving Speaking" (reducing learning anxiety and using meaningful communication in class); (3) "Two Valuable Techniques for Lowering Anxiety and Increasing Communication" (appropriate error correction and group work); and (4) "Applying the Techniques in Japan: Sample Lessons with Suggestions" (sharing tips on how to be successful learners, talking about cell phones, talking about scientists, and using a show-and-tell technique). Four appendixes contain handouts and a script and pictures to be used in the show-and-tell technique). (Contains 29 references.) (SM)

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Improving Our Students' Speaking Skills:

Using Selective Error Correction and Group Work

to

Reduce Anxiety and Encourage Real Communication

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Koichi Sato

Akita Prefectural Akita Senior High School
Akita Prefecture

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Improving Our Students' Speaking Skills:

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Introduction

Many Japanese students of English are highly competent in reading, writing, and listening, but not in speaking. Why is this the case? With the introduction of Oral Communication in The Course of Study, this has become a fundamental question among EFL teachers at Japanese high schools.

Some teachers blame this situation on the washback effect of entrance examinations. Some teachers assert this situation to be result of the Japanese characteristics of being quiet and shy in class. Some teachers complain about the difficulty of controlling oral communication activities in large classes. Other teachers point out the lack of oral communicative activities in textbooks, complaining that covering so many pages in a limited class time leaves no extra time for additional orally communicative activities.

All of these answers are valid to some extent. However, in actuality two other realities of the Japanese English language classroom are more to blame. First, students are afraid of making oral mistakes, which cannot be erased once they are uttered. That is, learning anxiety in speaking is a real problem. Second is that the oral activities done in English class are often meaningless and irrelevant to the daily life of the students. Students really want to be competent in speaking as well as in the other three skills. However, they face these two obstacles against them. It is essential that teachers realize the seriousness of these two obstacles if Japanese students are to improve their speaking abilities.

This paper examines these obstacles and offers two practical teaching techniques that teachers can use to overcome them. Specifically, chapter I identifies the underlying causes which tend to prevent Japanese students from learning to speak in English. Chapter II presents the evidence based on the literature that language anxiety and non-meaningful exercises tend to prevent EFL students from speaking out, and the need to solve these two problems. Then, chapter III introduces two specific techniques that can be used in EFL classrooms in Japanese high schools to solve these two problems: selective error correction and group work. Finally, chapter IV adapts these techniques for use in Japanese high school classrooms by providing four sample lesson plans that might be helpful to Japanese teachers with appendices which contain handouts. That is, this paper offers practical techniques to EFL teachers in Japan who are struggling against non-communicative, silent classrooms.

I. The problems which lead to Japanese who cannot speak English

Three problems produce Japanese who cannot speak English. The first problem is the widespread use of the grammar-translation method, which does not focus on oral communicative competence. The second problem is large class size, which tends to limit student speaking. The third problem is the Japanese characteristic unwillingness to stick out. This chapter examines these three reasons often observed in English classrooms in Japan today.

A. The grammar-translation method

The first reason why Japanese EFL learners cannot speak English lies in the dominance in Japanese teaching of the traditional teaching method, the grammar-translation method, which focuses primarily on grammatical accuracy in the written form of the language.

Behind the popularity of the grammar translation method lies the teachers' belief that the use of L1 is helpful for learning English. Teachers confirm the meanings of what students read in L1, and they check the correctness of students' translations into L1 with some grammar explanations, again in L1. Not only teachers, but also students as well believe that the use of L1 is necessary. Indeed, Matsuura (2001, p. 79), in her research, reports that more than two-thirds of Japanese EFL learners believe they need Japanese translation for their learning. It is not rare to see some serious students making the effort to translate all the sentences in their textbooks.

Secondly, the dominance of the grammar-translation method in Japanese schools is often said to be the washback effect of university entrance examinations, which focus mainly on conpetence in academic language use, not on commmunication. Most parts of these examinations consist of essays and questions which usually take the form of translations into L1. The questions are often targetted at grammatically complex sentences whether they are important or not in terms of comprehension of the text. Although these examinations have recently added questions to test communicative skills or daily conversation, most are given in printed styles or as audio recordings. The examinees answers them only in written form, or still worse, they just choose from an array of choices, but they never answer in spoken form. What is worse, these examinations are not qualifying ones, but competitive ones, which require the student to be superior to his rivals, not to be competent in language use. Thus, many teachers and students begin preparing for the examinations from even the first year of high school. Such preparation,

of course, tends to include L1 translations since speaking skill is not necessary on the examinations.

Thirdly, the teachers' own learning experiences also influence the method which they use to teach in middle school and high school. When these teachers were studying English themselves, at a university in Japan, the typical class probably entailed taking turns at reading textbooks aloud and then translating into L1. In addition, these teachers themselves, as successes on the university examinations, are the proof that this method of teaching and learning is right. It is not surprising, then, that these people use the grammar-translation method when they become teachers.

B. Large class size

The second reason why Japanese EFL learners cannot speak English is large class size, which tends to limit student speaking and encourages teacher-centered interaction. To introduce communicative speaking activities with as many as 40 students on average in one classroom necessitates being too noisy, and distracting teachers and students studying next door. Another problem of large classes is that teachers may not be able to monitor all the students in student-centered interactions, and sometimes problems of discipline makes doing so more difficult. Thus, as a negative alternative, class activity tends to be lecture style with a few questions and answers between teachers and students, as is done in many other non-language subjects.

C. Characteristics of Japanese students

The unwillingness to stick out, characteristic of the Japanese, is the third reason which prevents Japanese students from speaking out when learning English. Among the most important values for them is to blend in with their peers, to remain silent in a lecture-style class. Few of them volunteer to ask a question in class even if they have questions. Instead, they come to the teacher individually when the class is over. Few Japanese students volunteer to answer questions even if they clearly know the answer. In fact, they may look away from the teacher to avoid being called on. They are accustomed to class as a passive activity, and are afraid to speak out actively among as many as 40 students. Among the most important tendencies is to keep silent when they feel insecure. Students are afraid that their voluntary utterance may not be understood, may not be on track, or may not be correct. Thus, the best strategy is to remain silent.

II. Two keys for improving speaking

The EFL literature indicates that there are two keys to improving our students' speaking, namely, reducing learner anxiety and ensuring meaningful communicative exchanges in the classroom, which must become our goals.

A. First key goal: Reducing learning anxiety

The first key to improving our students' ability to speak is reducing their classroom anxiety when speaking.

1. Negative relationshop of anxiety to L2 achievement

It is widely recognized in the EFL literature that anxiety while learning has a negative relationship to L2 achievement. For example, Clément, et al (1994) identifies three different types of L2-related learner anxiety, including classroom anxiety, test anxiety, and use anxiety. He finds that, regardless of type, learner anxiety has shown negative relationships to L2 achievement (summarized in Yashima, 2002, p. 55). In terms of anxieties in oral activities, Nimmannit (1998) describes these learner anxieties as, "fear of losing face, insecurity, and lack of confidence — all of which slow down progress and impede success in foreign language teaching" (p.37). Katchen holds the same viewpoint, noting, "... speaking in public is a potentially face-threatening activity and students fear it ..." (1996, p. 3). Thus, these anxieties can prevent students from participating fully in oral communicative activities in classrooms. The situation is complex. Indeed, Greer identifies at least seven kinds of anxieties that may make students unwilling to talk in L2: (1) peers may not comprehend what the students say, (2) peers may misunderstand the students, (3) the students' low proficiency of L2 may stop communication, (4) the students' topic is not thought important enough to speak about, (5) the students may sound comical, (6) the students feel awkward after their peers talk in L1, and (7) the students are afraid of making errors (1999, p.183). We can conclude that students tend to be afraid that their oral competence in L2 is poor and fear that their weaknesses may get revealed in oral activities.

2. Reducing anxiety to foster more speaking

Conversely, it is equally clear from the literature that reducing their anxiety enhances students' learning to speak. Specifically, feeling relaxed in class improves students' self-

confidence, encouraging them to speak out as a result. As Yashima reports, "Communication confidence in a L2 was defined as a lack of L2 communication anxiety and perceived communicative competence" (2002, p. 59). "When the students' minds are relaxed, their ability to think and learn increases" (Lazanov, 1979, quoted in Nimmannit, 1998, p.38). Moreover, the level of relaxation is linked to fluency. That is, when the students' anxiety level is lowered and their self-confidence is increased, it is very probable that students will become more fluent (Katchen, 1996, p.5). Greer identifies a key means of lowering students' anxiety: "when students see what is expected of them, it is likely that they will fall into a rhythm, their anxiety will decrease, and they will become more motivated" (1999, p. 189). Greer explains further, noting that, "students tend to be more receptive when they know in advance what their teacher expects of them" (1999, p. 189). Once they are receptive, students are likely to believe in their own competence so that their anxiety decreases (Yashima, 2002, p. 62). Yashima found in her studies that "... a lower level of anxiety and higher perception of L2 competence led to a higher level of WTC [Willingness to Communicate] ..." (2002, p. 62). Thus, letting students know in advance what is coming next creates a non-threatening, relaxed atmosphere, reduces students' anxiety, and encourages students to speak out.

B. The second key goal: Using meaningful communication in class

Besides reducing learner anxiety, the second key to improving our students' speaking is using truly meaningful communicative activities in our classwork.

1. Ineffectiveness of older "drill"-type activities

The EFL literature clearly establishes that display questions and drills are meaningless, as are scripted "conversations" in textbooks, all of which discourage students from speaking. As a prime case in point, drills introduced by Audio-Lingual Method are notoriously meaningless. In Brown's view, drills which spotlight only limited language structures through repetition, known as simple repetition drills, substitution drills, and slot substitution drills only tax students' short-term memories, with no hope of improving communicative ability (2001, p. 131). Students are fed up with meaningless communication in classrooms. For instance, "A traditional classroom exchange in which one student asks *Where's the library?* and another student answers *It's on Green Street, opposite the bank,* when they can both see the answer, is not much like real communication" (Harmer, 2001, p. 85). In this pseudo conversation, the

asker never asks for clarification even if he missed "Green Street." In exercises where students are just taking the parts of one who asks and the other who answers, sometimes they are just reading scripts in turn. In such activities, though students may become accustomed to the rhythm of the target language, they are just moving their mouths, with no intention of conveying messages, with even less awareness of acquiring target languages. Hoekje (1993) explains as follows; "Many times it seems as if students have difficulty relating individual classroom activities to their own longer range goals of language acquisition" (p. 5), no doubt because the class activities are all scripted, with little free conversation work. Indeed, according to Sakura (2001),

> In an analysis of six of the best-selling Ministry-approved high school EFL textbooks in Japan, she [Gorsuch, 1999] chose a lesson at random from each textbook. Of the six lessons with a total of 42 sections, 41 sections did not call for use of unscripted language. (p. 6).

The implication is that EFL teaching at Japanese high schools often relies on "scripted" work only.

2. Making classroom activities truly communicative: Purpose and means

Communicative language teaching: Purpose or goal

Meaningful communicative activities aim at real communication and the development of communicative competence. The traditional EFL classes mentioned above focus on structure. In contrast, a "focus on communication" is one of key characteristics of communicative EFL teaching (Matsuura, 2001, p. 83). Explaining why this approach works, Brown (2001, p. 56) points out that children learn their first language by focusing on meaning and communication. That is, they relate every aspect of language to what is pertinent and significant to their daily search for information. In other words, meaningful learning connects new knowledge with what learners already know, creating stronger retention as a result. The same is true for second language learners, as Brown asserts further: "Whatever new topic or concept is introduced, attempt to anchor it in students' existing knowledge and background so that it becomes associated with something they already know" (p. 57). Furthermore, according to Sakura (2001, P. 8), a main goal of communicative language teaching is, "... the ability not only to communicate using rules of grammar, but also to use language appropriately in social contexts and to employ verbal and nonverbal strategies to overcome breakdowns in communication."

Thus, meaningful communicative language activities are defined as processes of exchanging information that is relevant to the speakers and listeners, cognitively connecting new information with existing information.

Implementing communicative language teaching: The means

How can we ensure that the speaking activities we use in class are truly communicative? The answer is that meaningful communicative language teaching allows learners to choose topics depending on their needs in real life, focusing on language functions. To ensure that classwork is truly communicative, three focuses need to be maintained: a focus (1) on real content, (2) on language functions, and (3) on fluency, not accuracy.

(1) A focus on real content: First, in truly communicative oral activities, the focus is on real content. "Students should have a desire to communicate something. They should have a purpose for communicating ... They should be focused on the content of what they are saying ... rather than on a particular language form." (Harmer, 2001, p. 85). Thus, meaningful communicative language teaching typically allows learners to choose content for a real communicative purpose. In short, learners' needs and their desire to communicate are key to successful communicative oral activities. In such activities, "... students make use of language that is unscripted vis-à-vis the teacher, i.e., language that the teacher does not know beforehand the student will use" (Sakura, 2001, p. 4) so that teaching particular forms or structures for an particular oral activity is not possible. Instead, as far as structures are concerned, Harmer (2001, p. 84) states that the principle in communicative approach is teaching students to learn to use language forms suitably in a wide variety of contexts, for a variety of purposes. Along the same lines, Brown (2001, p. 236) describes how purposeful communication with real content can be achieved in EFL classes: "Theme-based curricula can serve the multiple interests of students in a classroom and can offer a focus on content while still adhering to institutional needs for offering a language course *per se*." Hoekje, in his definition of the student-centered classroom (1993, p. 6), supports Harmer and Brown, noting that " ... students' needs as learners are taken seriously into consideration, including their need for a real communicative purpose in their activities and opportunities for adequate feedback on their purposes." To sum up, context and a real purpose for speaking is the most important; language structure instruction might come afterward, but only as feedback when communication has failed. Using a communicative method is sometimes

challenging to language teachers, as Brown notes, "Allowing the subject matter to control the selection and sesquencing of language items means that you have to view your teaching from an entirely different perspective" (p. 235). However, in this way, once students have the motivation and desire to orally communicate, speaking activities in the classroom can be successful. "Students will be more motivated if they are exposed to activities to which they can relate, which encourage them to use the target language, and which allow them to choose what they want to say. They will be motivated to engage in an activity if they feel it is cognitively challenging" (Nimmannit, 1998, p. 38). Therefore, "... an intensive English course for intermediate pre-university students might deal with topics of current interest such as public health, environmental awareness, world economics, etc. In the classroom students read articles or chapters, view video programs, discuss issues, propose solutions, and carry out writing assignments on a given theme" (Brown, p. 236). In conclusion, what the literature claims is that focusing on topics that are relevant to and meaningful for the students will provide the impetus to speak.

(2) **A focus on real language functions:** Along with the focus on communication of real content, meaningful communicative language teaching focuses on language functions. In other words, for oral activities to be truly communicative, the focus needs to be on real language functions or holistic interactions such as clarifications, apologizing, suggesting, inviting, offering, rather than every small aspect of grammar and vocabulary. "Nowadays, oral skills classes at all levels are often structured around functional uses of language," reports Lazaraton, "In a non-academic context, these might involve basic greetings, talking on the telephone, interacting with school personnel, shopping and the like" (2001, p. 105). She continues, noting that delivering oral presentations and conducting or participating in conferences are required functions in academic classrooms for adults (p. 105). Harmer summarizes Lazaraton's observation that standard CLT introduces authentic communication to students and that it is much more important that students' task performance be successful than that their language use be accurate (2001, p. 85). In addition, Harmer asserts, "Make sure that a large proportion of your lessons are focused on the use of language for purposes that are as genuine as a classroom context will permit. Students will gain more language competence in the long run if the functional purposes of language are the focal point" (p. 56).

(3) A focus on fluency, not accuracy: The third focus of a communicative approach is on fluency. Language function-based activities with purposeful communication motivates students to be fluent. In other words, the more learners want to convey what they have in their mind, the more talkative and thus fluent they become. Indeed, students seem to sense this. According to the study by Matsuura (2001, p. 81), most learners believe that learning to interact with each other and their instructors is essential, and almost two thirds of learners do not believe in a focus on grammar. They recognize that what learners need is the competence to communicate fluently. "... A smooth transaction is valued more than linguistic or pronunciation accuracy" (Matsuura, p. 87). The motivation to speak out discussed above applies here. As Brown asserts, "Whether selecting fluency development activities from books or creating new activities, teachers should remember that fluency development activities will work best if the students are focused on getting their meaning across" (2001, p. 177). In other words, when students have real purpose for their oral communication, thus motivated, their focus will be on speaking out information which they really want to convey, not on being grammatically or phonetically accurate.

III. Two valuable techniques for lowering anxiety and increasing communication

For reducing anxiety and increasing meaningful activities, the two goals discussed in the previous chapter, the EFL literature identifies two valuable techniques that accomplish both goals at the same time. These two techniques are selective error correction and group work.

A. Appropriate error correction

First, appropriate error correction can greatly reduce student anxiety and increase meaningful classroom exchanges. The literature argues that appropriate error correction will take into the account the fact that fluency causes errors as a natural process of improvement.

1. Errors as a natural part of fluency

Making errors is a natural process of L2 learning and yet many learners and teachers are not aware of this fact. Indeed, "Non-native speakers rarely appreciate the fact that native speakers make errors as a natural part of using language" (Brown, 2001, p. 175). Corder (1967), too, notes the inevitability of errors as an integral part of the learning process. He points out that examining learners' errors can provide a source for approaching the process of SLA (quoted by Nunan, 2001, p. 88). "Errors were seen," Nunan adds, "... as a normal and healthy part of the learning process." Indeed, the more fluent learners are, and thus the more utterances they make, the more errors they make.

In short, paying more attention to fluency implies that errors will occur as a natural result. Encouraging students to make errors is, then, part of fluency. Brown (1996, p. 175) writes that making errors is the only way to self-correction and that teachers need to encourage students to take risks. As Brown puts it, to achieve fluency, "... students need to free themselves of the constraints of carefully monitoring their accuracy and focus instead on getting their message across."

The implications for teaching are great. In real classrooms, teachers are typically expected to address different aspects of language; fluency, accuracy and complexity (Bygate, 2001, p. 18). Among the three, a focus more on fluency, and not so heavily on accuracy or complexity, generally improves learners' speaking development. Generally the term fluency has been used to mean "the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inapproapriate slowness or undue hesitiation" (Hedge, 1933, quoted by Lazaraton, 2001, p.

104). However, Hedge translates fluency more broadly as "natural language use," which tends to occur when the focus of language activities is on communicating with fewer apparent corrections (Lazaraton, 2001, p. 104). Thus, as Nishimura asserts, whatever kind of errors may be uttered, teachers need to avoid breaking into the flow of communication (2000, p. 23).

2. Selective error correction

In order to facilitate fluency as discussed above, error correction needs to be done selectively, because too much correction may discourage students from voluntarily speaking out, depriving them of self-confidence. The traditional concept of error correction in EFL was to correct every error which learners make, whereas the more recent concept puts stress on limited advice and correction that is provided only when meaning is incomprehensible (Crookes, 2001, p. 40). Thus, "Some teachers choose to correct only those errors which impede communication (such as incorrect word order) and ignore less serious errors (such as third person singular —s or phoneme confusion)" (Lazaraton, 2001, p. 110).

Next comes the question of how to correct. Four principles or techniques seem to apply. First, in order for activities to be meaningful and thus communicative, error correction itself needs to be communicative. Thus, Larsen-Freeman proposes that teachers recast or reformulate students' erroneous production in a communicative way (2001, p. 256). When teachers found students' utterances incomprehensible or misunderstanding, teachers may ask for clarifications or may recast in question style what the students said. The point here is that error corrections themselves needs to be communication.

Second, error correction may work best if it is indirect and unobtrusive. This technique may be particularly relevant for Japanese learners, where straightforward correction by a teacher in the presence of other students might hurt their feelings. That is, Matsuura's survey shows that "88% of the students indicated that they wanted their teachers to correct their grammar mistakes" (2001, p. 83). At the same time, they fear losing face, or having their conversation disturbed. Doyon (2000, p. 20), with regard to the issue of students' nervousness suggests that teachers take less obtrusive routes in their forms of error correction. Lazaraton adds to Doyon's assessment, noting that overt correction in class may disturb communication and that some later coaching or tutoring, as required, may be provided instead (p. 110). In other words, the most advisable way is to provide indirect correction in a communicative and moderate manner.

As a third technique, Nishimura suggests, "When some peculiar errors are to be noted, JTE

[Japanese Teacher of English] and ALTs [Assistant Language Teachers] should give corrective feedback at the end of the class" (2000, p. 22).

Finally, self-correction and peer-correction are two alternative techniques. Doyon feels that teachers need to wait until they are sure of students' ability to correct their own errors (p. 20), and Crookes also argues that corrections by peers are advantageous in that they are typically at the proper stage of development in students' interlanguage grammar. These observations remind us that our students' self-learning skill should be one of our goals.

Thus, we can conclude that the best way to handle error correction is to provide moderate error correction, taking into consideration students' anxiety, fluency, and ability to do self-correction.

B. Group work

Second, like appropriate error correction, group work can also help achieve the two goals of anxiety reduction and meaningful communication for the purpose of fostering speaking ability. The literature argues that group work creates a comfortable atmosphere and the intimate community necessary for learners to take risks in speaking.

1. The advantages of group work

Why is group work such a prevalent method in EFL teaching around the world today? How can it reduce anxiety, increase communication, and thus, foster greater speaking atmosphere? Essentially, the answer is that group work allows students to take the initiative in controlling their communicative activities, thus, reducing anxiety, facilitating responsibility, creating community, and smoothing the progress of fluency as a result. Above all, group work, with fewer students than a whole class as one large group, creates an intimate atmosphere. "It is our responsibility", claims Hoekje, "to ensure that classroom tasks are an effective ... way to build classroom community" (1993, p. 5). Doyon (2000, p. 19) agrees that generating a classroom mood which leads to a friendly atmosphere is the most effective thing that we can do. A second, related, benefit is that group work typically creates a sense of security. As discussed, students are afraid of looking silly in front of other students though they do have a desire to improve their English. However, once they are in a small group, where they realize their peers feel the same, Doyon believes, there is a tendency for students to try to use more of their target language (p. 19). Nimmannit offers another analysis of why students feel secure in groups:

"they [individual students] will not be the only ones to shoulder the blame or to lose face if they answer incorrectly" (1998, p. 38). The third advantage of group work is that it allows students to participate more and to do so more actively. In Tsui's study (2001), "It was found that ... group work provides more opportunities for learners to initiate and control the interaction, to produce a much larger variety of speech acts and to engage in the negotiation of meaning" (p. 122). Along the same lines, Lee points out that being responsible for their peers' learning in a group makes students more active (1999, p. 7).

To sum up, it is clear from the literature that group work offers potential advantages which the teacher-centered class lacks; 1) a friendly community, 2) a relaxed atmosphere with a sense of security, and 3) a more active and responsible attitude with more opportunities to speak out. In fact, these advantages of group-learning activities have been recognized by native English speaking teachers as being particularly effective for Japanese EFL learners (Matsuura, 2001, p. 76). Moreover, some Japanese EFL experts such as Akita also see the great potential benefits for group work in Japan: "Japanese may act extremely shy individually, but in a group they can act extrovertly" (quoted by Greer, 2000, p. 189).

2. Successfully implementing group work: Tips

However, effective group work in the classroom does not occur automatically. Indeed, group work requires teachers' careful involvement to be successful. The teachers' job begins with the planning and preparation for the group work activity. Leki identifies three initial requirements that the teacher must be aware of for a group work activity to be successful. Great care, preparation and thought on the part of the teacher are required to address these requirements: (1) it is necessary for students to be well-prepared for negotiating; (2) it is necessary for their task to be open-ended; (3) it is necessary for their task to require discussion and cooperation of students (2001, p. 41). Hoekje adds to Leki's another requirement, namely that (4) it is necessary for teachers to inform students of the importance of group work. The teacher needs to explain the advantage of interlanguage grammar. Otherwise, "They may feel that the English spoken by other students and themselves is mistake-ridden and not worth listening to" (Hyde, 1993, p. 346).

Second, beyond their importance in the initial preparations for group work, the teacher's role is central in the actual implementation of group work. That is, once an activity begins, Hoekje emphasizes, teachers' circulation from group to group is critical, a technique by which

the teachers can signal their accessibility (1993, p. 5). This accessibility is indispensable for students to be motivated, because, Hoekje continues, students' recognition of the helpfulness of this activity depends on teacher's error correction and suggestions, which can be provided only if the teacher circulates among the groups. The second role of the teacher during the activity is to assign roles to each member within groups. Brown (1996, p 177) describes the *blending in* technique introduced by Anderson. "Assigning group members roles of *leader*, *secretary*, and *spokeman*" for inter-group competition combines "the Japanese need for group-mindedness with the need for consensual decision making," assuring members' responsibility and paticipation which are discussed below.

A third consideration that the teacher needs to keep in mind to make group work successful is to arrange for frequent group change. MacIntyre, et al. (1988), in their study of "Willingness to Communicate," identify variables such as learner personality, intergroup climate, and intergroup motivation as among various causes which can affect students' involvement in group activities (quoted by Yashima, 2002, p. 56). More detail is supplied by Hyde (1993), who writes (1) that students are sometimes obliged to share activities with classmates who they do not want to talk to (p. 346), (2) that some students never give recognition to what their peer says, insisting on their own judgments (p. 344), and (3) that "this unhappy experience may well become something of a nightmare if regular changing was not to occur in class" (p. 345).

To conclude, the four key tips for successful implementation of group work are: (1) considerable preparation ahead of time by the teacher, (2) accessibility and engagement of the teacher once the activity is in progress, (3) individual role assignments for each student, and (4) careful consideration of the relationships among students including changing of groups and assignments within the groups.

IV. Applying the techniques in Japan: Sample lessons with suggestions

In the chapter III, this paper discussed two teaching techniques—selective error correction and utilization of group work—which will encourage Japanese EFL students to participate more in speaking. Both techniques are useful for reducing learning anxiety, and making communication meaningful, the two keys identified in chapter II for improving our students' speaking. Chapter IV will now present four sample lesson plans for speaking activities that Japanese teachers might find useful. All of them incorporate group work and selective error correction focused on fluency.

In general, the four lessons are divided into three or four stages: all include preparation and oral group work or discussion as the first two stages and most include group preparation and reporting as the final stages. The handouts for the four sample lessons are found in appendices 1 to 4. (In the sample lessons below, "T" stands for "teacher," "Ss" for "students.")

A. Sample lesson #1: Sharing tips on how to be successful learners

This lesson uses a topic which is relevant to students' daily life, which most students have talked about very often, and which therefore draws the interest of many students: how to be successful learners. The exchange of information among students makes for real and meaningful communication.

Students are interested in and want to know how their peers study. In the task, students talk of their own experiences with studying, sharing both successful and unsuccessful experiences, along with some advice and reflections. The key is that the information is shared first in groups, and only later in the whole class. This lesson might be the most effective if given just before or soon after a regular examination (ie. a mid-term or term-end examination), when students are most conscious of studying for examinations. The lesson is divided into four stages: preparation, group discussion, group preparation for presentation to class, and oral reporting.

[Sample Lesson #1]

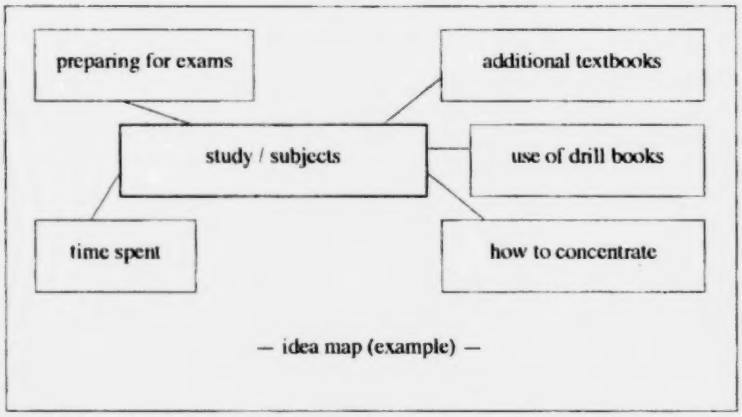
1. Preparation

- T puts Ss into ten groups of four. Each member in a group is assigned a role by T: a leader, a language checker, a time keeper, a writer.

- Each group chooses one school subject they want to discuss (ie., mathematics, chemistry, English, Japanese, etc.).
- The subject may vary depending on the curriculum of schools, grades, and classes. Several groups may choose the same subject according to their interest. However, T may want to make sure the numbers of groups discussing certain subjects are relatively even.
- Time allotment: 5 minutes.

2. Group discussion

- Each group brainstorms what they want to know about becoming successful learners. Ss name as many topics and categories as they can think of. Writers in each group make the member's response into idea maps.



— idea map (example) —

- Members in each group share their own problems with studying, tips for studying, successful and unsuccessful experiences of studying. They discuss how they study (ie., what additional textbooks they use, how they utilize drill books, how they prepare for exams, how they concentrate when studying, how often and how long they study, what do they do to motivate themselves to study, etc.) During this activity, roles of each member are as follows;

a leader:	to make sure every member is participating in the discussion, to call on any member to speak out.
a writer:	to make notes of what each member mentions. (handout #1)
a time keeper:	to keep time for smooth discussion in a limited time.
a language checker:	to make sure all the members are using English, to check any difficulties in expressing themselves. (handout #2)

- T circulates from group to group to make sure that all members in a group are taking part in the discussion, and that they are accomplishing their assigned roles. T also helps groups with their expression in English, sometimes in response to a request from the language checkers.
- T may should try to participate in the discussions of every group and listen to the group. This is an essential role for the T. It is very important that the T recast any errors in a communicative way, so that the focus remains on communicating contents.

ex. 1) S: I have trouble to concentrate to study.
T: Ah, you have trouble in concentrating on your study, Tell us in detail about it.

ex. 2) S: ... This is what I prepare for math exams.
T: Ah, you prepare for math exams in this way. This is how you prepare for math exams. (speaking to other members), Do you understand him?

- Too much interfering may disturb activities, depriving leaders of their roles in the groups. T makes sure error corrections are so natural that they do not stop the flow of group discussions. T also helps Ss with expression in English.
- Time allotment: 10 minutes.

3. Group planning for presentation to the class

- Each group selects a reporter, the one who is going to deliver a report on their group discussion to the whole class. All the members in groups (1) decide which pieces of advice for successful study to include, (2) help reporters to make notecards which the reporters will use in their delivery, (3) help reporters rehearse. T reminds reporters to deliver their reports with proper eye contact and voice. (Time allotment: 20 minutes)
- Rehearsing at this stage reduces the reporters' anxiety about speaking out in front of the whole class. Making notecards and rehearsing in the small group helps each member in a group to be responsible for their peer's performance, as well as their own. T again circulates among groups encouraging reporters and other members of groups as they prepare for effective presentations.
- Time allotment: 15 minutes.

4. Reports, listening, and discussion

- T distributes handout #3 to all the Ss so that Ss can focus on what to listen for and can take notes.
- All reporters in turn announce the results of their groups' discussions to the whole class.
- Two minutes are allowed after each presentation, when other groups can ask for further information or advice from any member of the group. Each audience group may discuss what to ask, this procedure also reduces anxiety about speaking out in front of many peers.
- Ss from the presenting group take turns answering questions. They may also withhold an immediate answer if they are not sure.
- When all the presentations are done, each group discusses and votes for three groups that gave the best advice.
- Time allotment: 20 minutes.

B. Sample lesson #2: Talking about cell phones

This lesson also uses a topic which is familiar to students and relevant to their daily life, tools which most students have used and are interested in: cell phones. Moreover, the topic in this lesson deals with an American cell phone company, Verizon, which introduces one aspect of life in the United States. This lesson can be used most effectively as a follow-up activity after

reading topics related to technology in Ministry-authorized textbooks.

[Sample Lesson #2]

1. Preparation

- T asks students how they use cell phones. T draws an idea map on the blackboard according to Ss' responses. During this stage Ss brainstorm functions of cell phones. Ss may also want to discuss features and factors they think important in selecting equipment (ex: standby times, size and weight, Internet browsing, different ring tones, etc.) and plans (cost, included minutes, long distance, etc.).
- T divides students into nine groups of four to five. Each student has a role in the group (This procedure is the same as in Sample lesson #1). The fifth member in groups may have another role such as a price calculator or a contract writer.
- Three groups play the role of a family, that is in the market for a cell phone plan. The other six groups play the role of sales agents for the cell phone company, Verizon.
- Time allotment: 5 minutes.

2. Group discussion

[Sales Conference 1, role as a phone company]

- Each group selects two products and two plans to "sell" from the handout #1A and #1B. Ss are to look through the leaflets of their products carefully to make their decision (Each group receives the same handout).
- Each group thinks of some advanced use of their products to propose to their potential customers and makes advertisements for them. Each group may make notecards listing key vocabulary for the features of the products to be sold.

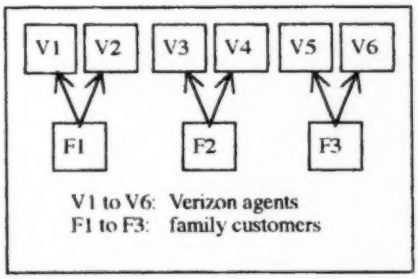
[Family Conference 1, role as customers]

- Each group discusses what they want in a cell phone in terms of function, plan features, phone capabilities, or expense, for example, included minutes, long distance coverage, cost per month and per minute, etc. Summarizes what they want in the handout #2.

[Sales / Visiting shops]

- Each family group visits two shops/agents, tells what type of plan and equipment they want, and compares the proposed products of the two shops/agents. Each family group is to take notes on handout #3 about the products offered for later discussion (family conference).

- Sales group meets a group of potential customers, promotes their products to meet their needs, proposes ideal use for their needs.
- Time allotment: 5 minutes for each round (10 minutes in total)



- Time allotment: 10 minutes

3. Group planning for oral presentations

[Sales Conference 2, role as a phone company]

- The two agents visited by the same family exchanges information on the methods they used to promote their sales. The two agents should try to predict with handout #4 which equipment and plan they think the "family" will choose, and why.
- Members in each agent group help their reporters give acceptance speeches when they have succeeded in contracting at the following, oral reporting and listening stage.

[Family conference 2, role as customers]

- Each family group discusses which agent to sign a contract with, which plan and model to select. The families are to discuss some important factors, advantages and ideal or advanced use proposed by their agents and effectiveness of their advertisements as well.
- A reporter for each family group is to announce the result of family conference. All members in a group help reporters as in Sample lesson #1. It is desirable to keep each group as far away from one another as possible. Otherwise, one group may hear other groups' decisions, which makes the following report less exciting.
- Time allotment: 15 minutes.

4. Oral reporting and listening

- T passes out handout #5 to all the Ss so that they can focus on what to listen for. All reporters announce their result of family conferences.
- When all the reports are done, the best selling agents are allowed to make some acceptance speeches and express their joy at achieving the most sales.
- Time allotment: 15 minutes.

C. Sample lesson #3: Talking about scientists —Using the 4/3/2 technique

As a practical technique to facilitate oral communicative competence in group work, one which both reduces learners' anxiety about speaking and facilitates their fluency, Lee (1999, p. 3) describes *the 4/3/2 technique* proposed by Maurice (1993). Here is the explanation of *the 4/3/2 technique* by Lee.

> In 4/3/2, learners form pairs and are assigned the role of either "speaker" or "listener." The speakers give a four minute talk on a familiar topic. Then they change partners, giving the same talk to a different person. During the second delivery, however, the time is limited to only three minutes. Finally, they change partners again and try to deliver the same talk within two minutes. The goal is to give the same talk three times, each time speaking faster so as to finish within the allotted time (p. 3).

According to Lee, the *4/3/2 technique* has three advantages for facilitating students' fluency: (1) speakers concentrate on conveying a message with three different listeners, (2) repeated talk makes delivery easier and faster, and (3) students try to speak at a challenging speed as the time limits reduced (p. 4).

However, this acitivity, Lee continues, may not succeed in classrooms in Japan with some students complaining that they have nothing to say (p. 4). This is why he re-cast *the 4/3/2 technique* as *Retell It! 3/2/1*, which provides students with passages to talk about. Lee describes *Retell It! 3/2/1* as follows:

> *Retell It! 3/2/1* requires two different texts, which should be short (generally between 200 to 400 words) and easy for the students to understand and discuss. It is important that the texts be kept simple because the goal of the activity is to develop fluency, not linguistic knowledge. Ideally, there should be no new words or grammar (p. 5).

The key difference between *Retell It! 3/2/1* and *the 4/3/2 technique* is that every student surely has something to talk about, namely the passages. In addition, after the third round both as speakers and listeners, students take simple quiz asking about the two passages (Lee, p. 6).

Retell It! 3/2/1 offers more advantages than *the 4/3/2 technique* does for Japanese learners. The quiz after the talk makes students responsible for their own and their peers' learning. In order for the listeners as well as the speaking students themselves to do well on the quiz, the

students must concentrate on conveying messages as well as receiving them. On the other hand, however, Lee reports three negative aspects of this activity: (1) some students tend to use L1 (p. 8), (2) some others just read aloud the passages (p. 8), and (3) they do not find any merit in repeating as many as three times (p. 9). The last problem is solved if the teacher talks about the importance of repetition for fluency building or by using just two retellings of each passage. As for the first two problems, the use of a graphic organizer, not the full passage, may help. Thus, the following is another sample lesson which focuses on fluency with the use of group work to reduce learning anxiety. This sample lesson is to follow a lesson in a Ministry-authorized textbook: Lesson 7: The Discovery of Penicillin, *The CROWN English Series I New Edition* (Sanseido, 1998), which deals with a biography of Alexamder Fleming, who discovered penicillin.

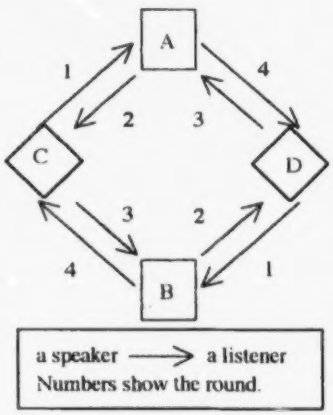
[Sample Lesson #3]

1. Preparation

- Ss form 10 groups of four.
- Two members in the group (student A and B) read passage 1 (handout 1A). Two other members (student C and D) read passage 2 (handout 1B). Each student, fills in the blanks of the graphic organizer (handout 2A and 2B) for the text s/he received. T circulates around the group, signalling their accessibility, answers question from Ss about passages, if any. T collects the original passages when all the Ss are finished.
- Time allotment: 10 minutes.

2. Oral group work: Retelling

- Each student in the group retells what they read by referring to their graphic organizers to the two members in the group who read the other story. This retelling stage has four rounds so that each member in the group tells his story in turn to two people and then listens to two other people, telling him the story he did not see.
- The teacher during this stage circulates from group to group, encourages speakers to talk clearly and encourages listeners to ask for clarification when they do not comprehend the speakers.
- Listeners can clarify and take notes of what speakers say.



- Time allotment: 10 to 15 minutes.
  (1st and 2nd round: 3 minutes for each, 3rd and 4th round: 2 minutes for each)

3. Quiz

- Each student takes an easy quiz about the passages s/he heard twice from his/her peers. The teacher may want to make this quiz a competition among groups.

- Time allotment: 5 minutes.

It is desirable to team-teach in executing this lesson. Circulating from group to group requires much help. In the retelling stage, especially, teachers need to correct errors appropriately to make sure messages are conveyed properly.

D. Sample lesson #4: Explaining illusions —Using a show-and-tell technique

Show-and-Tell is another lesson technique which offers language learners another good opportunity for self-expression, and helps speakers' delivery as well as listeners' comprehension. Brock (1999) explains Show-and-Tell as follows:

> Equipped with an interesting object at hand to stimulate memory and talk, one which can also absorb and deflect the audience's scrutiny, the Show-and-Tell speaker presumably undergoes less stress than language learners undertaking other forms of public speaking (p. 16).

In Brock's practice at Japanese high school, at the beginnings of Oral Communication class, two students took turns giving presentations, which were followed by listeners' questions (p. 16). However, Brock reports, "the student *audience* asked fewer questions after each presentation" (p. 16). The most notable reasons were, Brock continues, (1) "... they couldn't think of any," and (2) the speakers first made their drafts in L1, then translated them using dictionary which resulted in too much use of words unfamiliar to the listeners (p. 17).

Solutions to the problems above include, (1) arousing curiosity of the listeners by choosing familiar topic, and (2) encouraging speakers to make drafts without dictionaries (ie, encouraging them to prepare their draft in L2 from the beginning). The Show-and-Tell activity may be used as a follow-up activity after reading textbooks to do both. If the topics spoken about in presentations are related to those in the textbooks which students have just read such as computer viruses, history of the United States, or animal mysteries, it is easier for the listeners to understand, and thus easier to ask more questions from curiosity. In addition, vocabulary used

in the presentation can be similar to that in the text, which makes the presentation much easier both to give and to understand.

Brock used pair work during the preparatory stages for the presentation. In the small groups or pairs, learners read aloud their first draft to their peers, who ask for further information as feedback, helping the speaker complete the final draft on the talk (p. 17). The following is a sample lesson using the Show-and-Tell technique, one which also takes advantage of group work to reduce learning anxiety and to ensure real communication. This sample lesson is designed to follow reading a lesson in a Ministry-authorized textbook: Lesson 6: Can You Believe Your Eyes?, *The CROWN English Series I New Edition* (Sanseido, 1998), which deals with optical illusions and mirages.

[Sample Lesson #4]

1. Preparation

- After completing reading the section in the textbook, students make 10 groups of four and brainstorm what additional information related to the topic they are interested in researching. For example, students might brainstorm on mysteries of animal behaviour after reading Lesson 1: A Mysterious Sense of Direction, *The CROWN English Series II New Edition* (Sanseido, 1998), whose topic is the mystery of migratory birds. This sample lesson takes another topic included in another textbook: optical illusions (Lesson 6: Can You Believe Your Eyes?, *The CROWN English Series I New Edition* (Sanseido, 1998)). Each student in a group has a role: a leader, a visual aids creator, and a time keeper and language checker; all will act as reporters.
- Time allotment: 10 minutes.

2. Group work

- Each group does a search for their theme on the Internet to find material for using in a Show-and-Tell. Alternatively, students could search for real oblects to use. It is advisable that this search be assigned as homework and that students use English language search engines intended for native speaker children, which use simple vocabulary, for example:

yahooligans	<http://www.yahooligans.com>
Ask Jeeves for Kids	<http://www.ajkids.com/>
KidsClick!	<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick!/>
ThinkQuest Library	<http://www.thinkquest.org/library/>
Surfing the Net with Kids Archive	<http://www.surfnetkids.com/>

3. Group planning for oral presentations

- Each group prepares for a presentation in which every member speaks in turn in his/her assigned part. The members of the group work together to prepare, make a draft, practice rehearsing their segments, and help the visual aids creator to make or find effective objects. During this stage, the leader sees to it that all the members are engaged orally and actively in group work, the time keeper and language checker make sure that the reporters delivery has proper length for limited time of delivery and that all the members are communicating in L2.
- Time allotment: 15 minutes.

4. Oral report and presentations

- Every group as a panel takes turn in reporting what they searched for and found related to the topic dealt with in the textbook, using the real objects or visual aids they developed. For example, they may use OHP to show pictures downloaded from the Internet.
- Time allotment: 35 minutes.

Concluding remarks

Efforts to foster greater student speaking skills in order to better balance the four skills has been a fundamental theme in foreign language teaching in Japan recently. However, many classes remain unsuccessful in terms of oral activities, and teachers seem reconciled to focusing mainly on reading comprehension, attributing their decision to the demands of the university entrance examinations.

It is now agreed that simply increasing orally communicative activities is not sufficient. It is also necessary to be careful about learning anxiety, which can be intense in students in adolescence. It is now agreed that teaching textbooks alone and providing mechanical drills are not enough. It is also indispensable to expand topics and content talked about so that students can feel more connection to them, so that students can regard them as more interesting and stimulating, thus motivating. Meaningful communications using topics of the students' choice or topics of students' interest, instead of mechanical exercises, allows student to find real purpose in activities which focus on language functions necessary for daily life.

This paper has focused on two techniques which are particularly effective in addressing those two aims, reducing anxiety and ensuring meaningful exchanges in our classroom activities. First, selective error correction, which emphasizes fluency and thus does not stop the flow of orally communicative activities, is one way of reducing students' anxiety by fostering a comfortable atmosphere that encourages voluntary speaking. The other technique is the use of group work to create intimate communities in a large class, to provide realistic exchanges, and to allow students to paprticipate more in oral activities.

As long as one of the ultimate goals of foreign language learning is to be able to communicate orally and actively, speaking activities in classrooms are indispensable, and making these more successful is an urgent issue. Students have a strong desire to become more competent and fluent in English. It is our duty to provide our students with better opportunities to learn.

Appendix 1

The following are the handouts to be used in Sample lesson #1

handout #1

Small group discussion table (To be used during small group discussion of the task by writers of each group),

Every group may fill in some other categories to discuss according to the idea map drawn on the blackboard. (ex: use of additional textbooks, effective method to concentrate, etc.)

	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
preparing for exams				
time spent				
additional textbooks				
use of drill books				
how to concentrate				
(others)				

handout #2

Language check table (To be used during small group discussion of the task by language checkers of each group)

	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
use of English				
times spoke				
difficult words and expressions				

handout #3

Language check table (To be used by each student to take notes as the reporters give their talks)

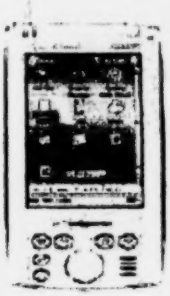
Group	Subject	Useful Tips
A		
B		
C		
D		
E		
F		
G		
H		
I		
J		

Appendix 2

The following are the handouts to be used in Sample lesson #2

handout #1A (Retrieved at <http://www.verizonwireless.com> at February 16, 2002 and adapted for classroom use)

Sales equipment catalogue (To be used by each sales group during small group discussions)

Kyocera KWC 2135 $19.99 	Mode Type - Tri-Mode Digital * Battery - Standard Lithium Ion (925 mAH) * Dimensions - 5.1"H x 2.0"W x 1.0"D * Standby Time - Up to 150 hours * Usage Time - Up to 270 minutes * Weight - 4.55 oz. Included Accessories: * Standard Lithium Ion Battery * AC mid-rate Travel Charger * Owners Manual * Warranty Card	* 4-Way Navigation Key for easy menu access * 5 line full bit map display (4 lines of text and 1 line of icons) * 15 assignable tones and melodies * Vibration Alert * Stores up to 199 numbers/e-mail addresses with name * Openwave WAP enabled Web Browser * CDMA Data Capable * 2-Way Text Messaging * Productivity Tools: Alarm Clock, Calculator, Tip Calculator, Stopwatch, Countdown timer
LG VX10 $99.99 	Mode Type - Tri-Mode Digital * Battery - Standard Lithium Ion (900mAH) * Dimensions - 3.3"H x 1.8"W x 0.97"D * Standby Time - Up to 110 hours (Digital) * Usage Time - Up to 180 minutes (Digital) * Weight - 3.8 oz. Included Accessories: * Lithium-Ion Battery (900 mAh) * Standard Holster * AC Mid-rate Desktop Charger * User Guide * Warranty Card	* 2.5mm headset jack to accept universal hands-free headsets * Caller ID ringers * CMX MIDI sound for ringers and games * Internal and external LCD display with time/date and caller ID * Web browser * CDMA data capable * 2-Way text messaging * Scheduler for maintaining appointments * Up to 6 entries for 199 important contacts * Express Network capable (Mobile Office kit sold separately) * 4-way navigation key * 19 ringer tones plus vibrating alert * Calculator * Bilingual (English & Spanish)
Audiovox Thera Pocket PC 2002/Phone $599.99 	Mode Type - Dualband * Battery - Lithium Ion (1100 mAH) * Dimensions - 5.023"H x 3.05"W x 0.77"D * Standby Time - Up to 8 hours * Usage Time - Up to 90 minutes (Digital) * Weight - 7.00 oz. Included Accessories: * AC Adapter * USB Cradle * 32 MB SD Memory Card * Earbud * Softcase with Belt Clip * Stylus (2) * Remote Control Unit * Companion CD containing: Microsoft. Outlook 2002 / Microsoft. ActiveSync. 3.5 / Microsoft. Money for Pocket PC Web / Microsoft. Pocket Streets Weblink / Microsoft. Reader Weblink	* Express Networksm * Mobile Messenger * Dual Band 800 MHz CDMA/1900 MHZ PCS * Hands free Speakerphone7 * Watcher Graphical User Interface * Microsoft. Windows. for Pocket PC 2002 OS * PC Synchronization * Microsoft. ActiveSync. * Microsoft. Pocket Outlook 2002 (Calendar, Contacts, Tasks, Notes, Inbox) * RAM 64MB (32 SDRAM and 32MB SD Memory card in box) * ROM 32 MB (Flash ROM) * SD card slot (SD card or SDIO card) * Infrared Port (max 115.2kbps) * E-mail and Internet Access * Quick 2 Netsm (14.4 kbps) * Home (Launcher) * Backup Utilities * Calculator * Windows. Media Player * Reflected Type Color TFT Display (w/front light) 65,536 Colors 240x320 pixels * 2.5 mm headset jack

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handout #1B

Sales plans catalogue (To be used by each sales group during small group discussions)
(Retrieved at <http://www.verizonwireless.com> at February 16, 2002 and adapted for classroom use)

Plan Type		Monthly Access	Monthly Airtime Allowance (in minutes)	Per Minute Rate after allowance
National Single Rate 150		$35	150	$0.40
Local Digital Choice Family Share Plan 500	1st line	$45	500 Shared & 250 Local Mobile to Mobile Minutes	$0.40
	Additional lines	$20	Shared & 250 Local Mobile to Mobile Minutes	$0.45
Express Network 1500		$150	1500	$0.25

handout #2

Family decision table (To be used by each family group during small group discussions)

Each group can add some features and functions discussed in category 4 to 8.	
1. size/weight	5.
2. equipment price	6.
3. monthly fee	7.
4.	8.

handout #3

Visiting shops table (To be used by each family group during sales/visiting shops discussion)

	Agent #	Agent #
Proposed model		
Proposed plan		
Advantages		
Disadvantages		
Comments		

handout #4

Agent prediction table (To be used by each agent group during group planning for oral presentations)

	type/name	reasons
predicted model		
predicted plan		
Comments		

handout #5

Family decision table (To be used by each student during oral reporting and listening)

Group	Decision		
F1	Agent	Model	Plan
	Reasons		
F2	Agent	Model	Plan
	Reasons		
F3	Agent	Model	Plan
	Reasons		

Appendix 3

The following are the handouts to be used in Sample lesson #3

handout 1A (passage A)

<retrieved at: http://www2.lucidcafe.com/lucidcafe/library/95nov/curie.html, on Feb. 9, 2002>

[A] Marie Sklodowska Curie

Maria Sklodowska (sklaw DAWF skah) was born November 7, 1867 in Warsaw, Poland. She would become famous for her research into radioactivity, and was the first woman to win a Nobel prize.

Marie Curie grew up in a family that valued education. As a young woman she went to Paris to study mathematics, chemistry and physics. She began studying at the Sorbonne in 1891, and was the first woman to teach there. She adopted the French spelling of her name (Marie) and also met Pierre Curie, who taught physics at University of Paris. Marie and Pierre soon married, and teamed up to conduct research on radioactive substances. They found that the uranium ore, or pitchblende, contained much more radioactivity than could be explained solely by the uranium content.

The Curie's began a search for the source of the radioactivity and discovered two highly radioactive elements, "radium" and "polonium." The Curie's won the 1903 Nobel prize for physics for their discovery. They shared the award with another French physicist, Antoine Henri Bacquerel, who had discovered natural radioactivity. In 1906 Pierre, overworked and weakened by his prolonged exposure to radiation, died when he was run over by a horse drawn wagon.

Madame Curie continued her work on radioactive elements and won the 1911 Nobel prize for chemistry for isolating radium and studying its chemical properties. In 1914 she helped found the Radium Institute in Paris, and was the Institute's first director. When the first world war broke out, Madame Curie thought X-rays would help to locate bullets and facilitate surgery. It was also important not to move the wounded, so she invented X-ray vans and trained 150 female attendants.

On July 4, 1934, at the age of 67 Madame Curie died of leukemia (aplastic pernicious anemia), thought to have been brought on by exposure to the high levels of radiation involved in her research. After her death the Radium Institute was rename the Curie Institute in her honor.

handout 1B (passage B)

< retrieved at: http://www2.lucidcafe.com/lucidcafe/library/95dec/pasteur.html, on Feb. 9, 2002>

[B] Louis Pasteur

Louis Pasteur was born on December 27, 1822 in Dole, in the region of Jura, France. His discovery that most infectious diseases are caused by germs, known as the "germ theory of disease," is one of the most important in medical history. His work became the foundation for the science of microbiology, and a cornerstone of modern medicine.

Pasteur's phenomenal contributions to microbiology and medicine can be summarized as follows: First, he championed changes in hospital practices to minimize the spread of disease by microbes. Second, he discovered that weakened forms of a microbe could be used as an immunization against more virulent forms of the microbe. Third, Pasteur found that rabies was transmitted by agents so small they could not be seen under a microscope, thus revealing the world of viruses. As a result he developed techniques to vaccinate dogs against rabies, and to treat humans bitten by rabid dogs. And fourth, Pasteur developed "pasteurization," a process by which harmful microbes in perishable food products are destroyed using heat, without destroying the food.

Pasteur was a thorough, highly intuitive researcher who always considered the wider ramifications to his work. While he revered science, Pasteur always believed that there were spiritual values that transcend it. Pasteur was also a capable public speaker, often defending his positions on various controversies with eloquence.

handout 2A

graphic organizer: Marie Sklodowska Curie		
birth:		
youth	study:	where:
	marriage:	
	research:	
search discovery		prize:
1906		
1911		
WWI		
1934		

handout 2B

graphic organizer: **Louis Pasteur**	
birth:	
1. hospitals & microbes	
2. immunization	
3. rabies	
4. pasteurization	
other talent	

handout 3A

quiz A

1. Marie Sklodowska Curie is famous for her search into _____.

   (1) radioactivity (2) immunization (3) nuclear medicine

2. Marie Sklodowska Curie studied mathematics, chemistry, and physics in _____.

   (1) Warsaw (2) Paris (3) London

3. The discovery of radium and polonium led her to Nobel prize for _____ in 1903.

   (1) chemistry (2) physics (3) medicine

4. Marie Sklodowska Curie's husband died when he was _____.

   (1) run over by a horse with wagon (2) doing his experiment in his labolatory

   (3) infected by germs

handout 3B

quiz B

1. Louis Pasteur's discovery is a foundation of _____.

   (1) radiotherapy (2) microbiology (3) rehabilitation

2. Louis Pasteur found that a microbe can be used as _____.

   (1) a hepafilter (2) a compost (3) an immunization

3. Louis Pasteur developed techniques to vaccinate _____ against rabies.

   (1) dogs (2) rats (3) horses

4. Pasteurization is a process in which microbes in perishable food products are killed with _____.

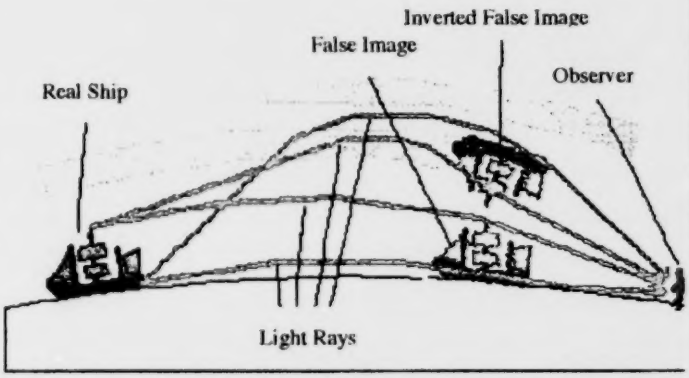
   (1) no oxygen (2) radio activity (3) heat

Appendix 4

The following are script and pictures to be used in the *Show-and-Tell* technique. The script and picture below are provided for the teacheer to use to demonstrate and introduce the Show-and-Tell activity in sample lesson 4. Then students in each group search related topics and give presentations to the whole class as outlined in sample lesson 4.

<retrieved at: http://www.unmuseum.mus.pa.us/mirage.htm, on Feb. 9, 2002>

When the effect [of the mirage] appears above the water, it is often referred to as a *Fata Morgana*. The phrase comes from the Italian version of the name of the sorceress Morgan Le Fay from the legends of King Arthur and Camelot. In ancient times these strange effects were considered the work of witchcraft.



The schooner Effie M. Morrissey was sailing the North Atlantic on July 17, 1939 when a Fata Morgana appeared. Though the coast of Iceland was some 320 miles away, Captain Bartlett indicated that it appeared as if it was only twenty five miles away. "The contours of the land and the snow-covered summit of the Snaefells Jokull showed up almost unbelievably near." Fata Morganas may also be the cause of legends about phantom ships that sail the sky. Reports of the ghost ship *Flying Dutchman* may well have been the reflection of some distant vessel. Scientists believe Fata Morganas are most likely to form when the sea is much colder than the atmosphere. As the water cools the air directly above it, a boundary layer forms. These types of mirages are most likely to show up after dawn, before dusk or as a storm is building up. They also tend to favor particular locations. The Straits of Messina, between Sicily and the Italian mainland, are famous for its Fata Morganas.

When several boundaries of air are involved, a mirage can become even more complex as the light is refracted multiple times. This can make natural objects, like cliffs, appear as city buildings, or castles. This is probably the best explanation for the Alaskan City mirage, though some contend that it was actually a magnification of the English city of Bristol some 2,500 miles away.

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